



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
*DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES*  
*A Healthcare Service Agency*

Dannel P. Malloy  
Governor

Patricia A. Rehmer, MSN  
Commissioner

**Memorandum:**

TO: Government Administration and Elections Committee

FROM: Commissioner Patricia Rehmer, DMHAS

DATE: March 11, 2013

SUBJECT: Written Testimony on Senate Bill SB 773

**Written**

Good Morning Senator Musto, Representative Jutilla and distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. I am Commissioner Patricia Rehmer of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, I am writing today to raise concerns regarding Proposed Bill No. 773, An Act Concerning the Siting of State Agency Facilities

Although it isn't clear what is intended by the use of the words "state agency facility", DMHAS assumes that the bill could have an impact on the future siting of any facility that provides mental health and or substance use services including group homes and other residential models of care.

**DMHAS is a health care agency.** We provide behavioral health services to over 100,000 individuals statewide, including inpatient hospital services, residential treatment, and community supports to thousands of individuals to assist them in their recovery from psychiatric disabilities and substance use disorders. We face many challenges in providing the best possible care to the people we serve. We want to expend our state dollars wisely to improve people's lives, as well as the communities in which they reside.

People with substance use disorders and psychiatric disabilities come to state hospitals for their care when they are not able to be managed in a general hospital setting or when they need intermediate- to long-term care. Most often, our clients are poor, and have chronic diseases which require, like any other chronic disease, ongoing care. We work with them, their families and advocates toward the best possible treatment outcome and to determine how best to assist them to achieve recovery. The challenges faced by the populations we serve are exacerbated when housing, jobs and community services are not available for those who are ready to live in the community.

Proposed Bill 773 would appear to restrict our ability to offer the best choices for the people we serve. Thank you again for the opportunity to address you on this issue and we are willing to answer any questions you may have.